United Nations A/C.1/56/PV.3

General Assembly

Official Records

Fifty-sixth session

First Committee

3rd meeting

Monday, 8 October 2001, 10 a.m.

New York

Chairman: Mr. Erdös ..... (Hungary)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Statement by the Chairman

The Chairman: The unprecedented terrorist attacks on the United States on 11 September caused immense tragedy and destruction. To the host country, to our host city and to the victims, we offer our most sincere condolences. These acts, by targeting innocent civilians and civilian structures, not only challenged our sense of security, but also outraged our conscience. We welcome the view of the Secretary-General that these cruel and violent events make the work of the United Nations for peace — and I would add disarmament, non-proliferation and security — more important than ever. They should lead us to renew our adherence to the promotion of the rule of law, both inside our countries and in the international arena, including the body of disarmament and arms control agreements.

The horrifying deeds that we witnessed have already marked indelibly the beginning of the new millennium and the new century, which we celebrated with solemn commitment last year. These acts should reinforce the resolve of the Member States, reflected in the Millennium Declaration, to strive for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons; to take concerted action in the field of conventional weapons, among others; to end the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons; and to rid the world of landmines.

Let us, then, continue our work during this session of the First Committee with new vigour to seek common purpose on the traditionally wide number of disarmament and international security items on the agenda. This can be our own valued contribution to realizing the fundamental goals of the United Nations. Here, for the next five weeks, we will be gathering as the expert forum on the steps to be taken towards disarmament and arms control. We should not underestimate the role that each and every one of us, and this Committee as a whole, can play to turn this place that is ours in the universe into a better and more secure home for mankind.

The unprecedented events of 11 September, questions such as the impact on disarmament issues of the type of attack that we saw and questions of how it was put into operation will be on our minds as we proceed to our agenda. We will also have to confront more acutely than ever before the stark reality of having to focus our attention in our deliberations on both State and non-State actors.

Let me refer in this context to the recently adopted Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), which in its operative paragraph 4 notes the close connection between international terrorism and illegal arms trafficking and illegal movement of nuclear, chemical, biological and other potentially deadly materials, and emphasizes the need to enhance coordination of efforts on national, subregional, regional and international levels in order to strengthen a global response to this threat to international security. I believe that this is a time for soul-searching and self-scrutiny.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

01-56803 (E)

To be realistic, we are faced this year with a continuing crisis in multilateral disarmament. Indeed, progress in important areas of multilateral disarmament has come to a near halt this past year in the fields of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. The utility of multilateralist approaches has been questioned. It is incumbent upon us to spotlight, support and promote the multilateral agenda, its great potential for and genuine contribution to international security.

As regards weapons of mass destruction, a chilling fact of the terrorist attacks on the United States was that not one weapon on the agenda of the Committee at this session was employed to bring about enormous loss of life, physical destruction and disruption of financial and economic activities in a powerful country. First, we must face what could have happened if the weapons that are on our agenda, especially nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, had been used. Secondly, we face the fact that these weapons still can and might be used accidentally, by misjudgement or miscommunication, or by design.

In the field of nuclear disarmament, despite the successful conclusion of the May 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the adoption of practical steps for systematic and progressive nuclear disarmament efforts, and notwithstanding the commitment made by world leaders at the Millennium Summit in September last year to the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, progress in this area has been limited. I urge all States, and especially the nuclear-weapon States, to grasp the urgency of this message, to capitalize on present opportunities and to find ways to eliminate the dangers these weapons still represent for mankind.

Five years ago, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was opened for signature. Yet, the challenges that confront its entry into force persist, despite the fact that 161 States have signed the Treaty and 79 have ratified it, including 31 of the 44 States whose ratification is specifically required for the Treaty to become effective. It is hoped that the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Treaty, which has been postponed to later this fall, will generate renewed efforts and approaches to promote the earliest entry into force of this Treaty.

The endeavours to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States concerned have been acknowledged as significant contributions not only to regional peace and stability but also to nuclear disarmament in general. Such efforts in various regions, bearing in mind the relevant guidelines of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, can effectively enhance international security. Progress made in this regard in 2000 in various parts of the world is to be welcomed and encouraged.

Sadly enough, after almost seven years of negotiations, the Ad Hoc Group of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) was not able to conclude negotiations on a verification protocol. An internationally agreed protocol is of paramount importance. It would be a significant contribution to strengthening the Convention, enhancing its effectiveness, ensuring compliance through verification and achieving a higher degree of transparency. The forthcoming Fifth Review Conference of the BWC will address this issue. We hope that it will identify ways and means to continue this urgent task.

The Chemical Weapons Convention has played and continues to play a vital role in international efforts to eliminate the dangers posed by weapons of mass destruction, to curb their proliferation and to achieve their elimination. While it is encouraging that 165 States have signed the Convention, it must be underlined that universal application of the Convention remains crucial to its effective implementation.

As is known, the issues related to plans concerning missile defences and their relationship to global security and strategic stability, their impact on current bilateral and multilateral arms control agreements and ongoing and future efforts in this field have been on the minds of many. The Panel of Governmental Experts set up at the previous General Assembly session, which is to prepare a report on the issue of missiles in all its aspects, began its work in August. We look forward to receiving the report of the Panel next year.

The use of outer space for peaceful purposes is expanding exponentially. In order to make full use of these exciting possibilities offered by new technology, but also to prevent space from becoming an arena of military confrontation, the existing legal regime needs to be reinforced and its effectiveness enhanced. Prevention of an arms race in outer space is of the utmost importance, in conformity with the provisions

of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies.

In July this year, the United Nations took a first significant step to address the scourge of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the illicit trade that feeds it. A programme of action to prevent, combat and eradicate such trade, adopted by consensus by the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, set forth a range of challenges to the international community. Translating that political commitment into action, effectively implementing the practical measures at national, regional and international levels, developing partnerships and cooperation and providing the necessary assistance to affected countries will go a long way to meeting that challenge.

While the Programme of Action as adopted did not fully meet the expectations of all countries, it is nevertheless clear that we need to sustain the momentum generated by the Conference, its preparations and the two United Nations panels on small arms of 1997 and 1999. Relying on the follow-up process to the Conference, action should be encouraged by this Committee through the adoption of pertinent resolutions.

The Conference on Disarmament completed its third full year during which its work remained stalemated. Member States were not able to agree on a programme of work. Disagreement remained on the agenda items on nuclear disarmament and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The pre-eminent mission of the Conference is to hammer out agreements, treaties and conventions on disarmament. The Conference has produced remarkably complex conventions and treaties, which are the bread and butter of our efforts. The causes of the lack of progress extend beyond the walls of the Palais des Nations in Geneva. The consequences of the current stalemate represent a lost opportunity to pursue the creation of enduring legal commitments open to all States.

As regards anti-personnel landmines, there has been a marked decrease in mine victims — the first goal of all global efforts at mine action. Fewer countries are now producing anti-personnel mines and the number of stockpiled mines has decreased. However, anti-personnel landmines continue to threaten countries, people, economies and societies. For countries emerging from conflicts, the indiscriminate placement of landmines during times of conflict can be a grave problem and can undermine their efforts at economic and social progress.

A little more than a week ago, the States parties to the Mine Ban Convention met for a third annual meeting to assess the situation of mine action and review the status of the Convention. In December, the Third Annual Conference of States Parties to Amended Protocol II of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons — the Inhumane Weapons Convention — will take place. These continual follow-up actions have kept a permanent spotlight on the issues. The pioneering formation of partnerships between Governments and civil society, in the conference room and in the field, is an important asset and experience that can be applied to other, related activities in future, in the pursuit of the ultimate objective of eliminating these weapons.

A Group of Governmental Experts to Prepare a United Nations Study on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education was recently created. The Group is conducting a wide survey of current programmes and projects in the field and will present its report in 2002, with some forward-looking recommendations. As we contemplate the extremism, fanaticism and hatred that went into the acts committed on 11 September, and into many others carried out over the years, education in disarmament and peace must be viewed as a patient and long-term, yet indispensable, approach to confidence-building and mutual understanding in and among people and societies.

I have not tried to cover and exhaust all the multifaceted issues on our agenda of the First Committee, but rather I have sought to highlight some of the important questions that await us as we go into the next couple of weeks. Let me express my hope that in the extraordinary circumstances prevailing at this fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, all of us will make genuine efforts to come to grips with the many crucial security challenges of our time. Looking at our agenda, it is not an exaggeration to say that what is at stake here and now, in Conference Room 4 at United Nations Headquarters in the fall of 2001, is nothing less than the survival and secure existence of our human species.

Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs

The Chairman: It is now my pleasure to give the floor to Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, the Under-Secretary-General of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, to make a statement.

Mr. Dhanapala (Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs): I begin by congratulating you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to guide the work of the First Committee. Your distinguished career equips you well for the tasks ahead, a career that, in the disarmament area, features your prominent role in the historic 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as well as your chairmanship of the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters. I also congratulate the other members of the Bureau and pledge the fullest support of the Department for Disarmament Affairs in all your efforts to make this a productive session.

On 10 September 2001, the Secretary-General issued his annual message on the eve of what was to be the International Day of Peace. He urged people everywhere to try to imagine a world quite different from the one we know. He called on everybody to picture those who wage war laying down their arms and talking out their differences. He stated that this should be a day of global ceasefire and non-violence; and he closed with words of hope. He said,

> "Let us seize the opportunity for peace to take hold day by day, year by year, until every day is a day of peace".

The next morning, only an hour before the Secretary-General was planning to ring the Peace Bell, thousands of citizens from dozens of countries perished in acts of unmitigated brutality that defy description.

The challenge now facing the Committee, as it convenes in the shadow of that dark and ominous cloud, is to confront these new and old threats to international peace and security. At this critical juncture, when the peoples of the world stand together in repudiating mass terrorism, we must all work together to build on this remarkable display of unity. This is a time for cooperation, for reaffirming the rule of law, for recognizing common threats, and for acknowledging the extent to which our common security depends upon justice, fundamental human rights and the equitable development of all societies. For the First Committee it is particularly a time for reinforcing the roads and bridges leading to the fulfilment of multilateral disarmament commitments, while exploring new paths to reach the same destinations. It is, in short, a time to resume the work of realizing the vision described in the Secretary-General's message on what was to have been the International Day of Peace.

Only history will decide how much of a defining moment 11 September will be. But history will certainly not absolve us for failing to learn the lessons of that unspeakable tragedy. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, in his address to the General Assembly on 1 October, stated that

> "While the world was unable to prevent the 11 September attacks, there is much we can do to help prevent future terrorist acts carried out with weapons of mass destruction". (*A/56/PV.12*)

For us in the disarmament community he set out several guidelines for future actions that I hope delegations will consider carefully. Some specific initiatives that merit serious consideration include, first, the need to expand the membership of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material while strengthening controls over nuclear facilities and the storage and transportation of nuclear materials.

A second initiative is the need for new efforts to negotiate a convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism. The recent terrorist attacks should add new urgency to those efforts.

A third initiative is the need for a global database based on publicly available materials on acts, threatened acts or suspected acts of terrorism involving weapons of mass destruction. The Department for Disarmament Affairs is in contact with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons on many of these issues and is prepared, if so mandated, to establish such a database.

The starting point for the work of the Committee must be the sobering realization that last month's tragedy could have been so much worse had nuclear, biological or chemical weapons been used, as you have noted, Mr. Chairman. The objective facts require that we be neither alarmist sores of panic nor complacent

do-nothings. We do, however, have a duty to protect innocent citizens throughout the world by reinforcing the multilateral disarmament regime.

Many of the deadliest super-weapons remain difficult to manufacture due to the unique characteristics of the weapons' materials, improvements in methods of detecting the production or testing of such weapons, and the technical problems involved in converting dangerous materials into effective deliverable weapons. The world community must do all it can to raise these hurdles while strengthening the fundamental norms against the possession or use of such weapons. The best way to accomplish that is through the active pursuit of a robust disarmament agenda. Of one thing we must be clear: in the disarmament area there is no going back to business as usual.

The agenda of the First Committee has always been challenging; yet the tasks ahead are more critical than ever. Many of those challenges, however, existed well before the tragic events of 11 September. At the conclusion of its thirty-seventh session, at Geneva last July, the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters concluded that there currently exists a crisis in multilateral disarmament diplomacy. Disarmament is facing difficult times. There is no doubt that its future rests heavily upon a strong level of understanding and support in civil society.

Yet today we see signs of private foundations and other funding agencies moving out of the field of disarmament or reducing their commitments to this goal. As funding grows scarce — a problem aggravated by the turbulent global financial markets — key groups in civil society are finding it increasingly difficult to sustain their work on disarmament issues. In academia we find all too few articles in serious scholarly journals on disarmament per se, and very few new doctoral dissertations that deal directly with disarmament. We find the news media focussing on the glare of current conflicts rather than on the typically slow and incremental process of eliminating the weapons used in such conflicts, or eliminating the weapons that could even destroy the world. These trends must be reversed. At a minimum, more funding must be made available to non-governmental groups working in the field of disarmament.

On an inter-State level, we find few Governments with offices specifically devoted to disarmament issues. New Zealand still has the distinction of having the only minister for disarmament. We see a flourishing global arms market. The United States Congressional Research Service estimates the total value of arms transfers from 1993 through 2000 to be around $303 billion. Almost 70 per cent of those arms were imported by developing countries. Meanwhile, global military expenditures are again on the rise, amounting last year to an estimated $800 billion. This growth in the arms trade and military spending contrasts with the terms of Article 26 of the Charter, which refer to the least diversion of the world's human and economic resources for armaments.

At times it appears — certainly in terms of United Nations budgetary procedures — that we are seeing instead the least diversion of resources for disarmament. It goes without saying that the smallest department in the United Nations is the Department for Disarmament Affairs, which is now seeking a modest increase in the 2002-2003 biennium budget that is before this session of the General Assembly. It is also not uncommon to read of financial problems and resource shortages in key treaty-based organizations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

The treaties that constitute the global legal regime for disarmament are also seriously incomplete. None of the key treaties prescribing the elimination of weapons of mass destruction has universal membership, and undocumented allegations of non-compliance continue to be heard among the States parties, eroding confidence in the various treaty regimes. Many important treaties have still not entered into force, including START II and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, whose members will soon meet in New York to consider ways of accelerating the ratification process. With respect to the Biological Weapons Convention, many years of effort to conclude a protocol to strengthen this key treaty have ended abruptly. The treaty's next five-year Review Conference, scheduled to convene next month in Geneva, provides an opportunity to revisit this issue. It must not be missed.

With regard to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), while it is still too early to predict the fate of the "13 steps" to nuclear disarmament agreed at the NPT 2000 Review Conference, it is fair to say that delegates attending

next year's first Preparatory Committee meeting for the Treaty's 2005 Review Conference will certainly expect hard evidence of a good-faith effort to implement each of these important goals.

The elimination of landmines is another very important international disarmament activity, given that they continue to impede the development and security of populations in almost one third of the world's countries. Last month, I attended the third annual meeting of the States parties to the Mine Ban Convention in Managua, Nicaragua, convened by the United Nations pursuant to resolution 55/33 V. Despite the uncertainties of air travel at the time, the event was marked both by an impressive attendance — more than 90 States — and by positive results that augur well for the future implementation of that Convention.

The second annual conference of States parties to Amended Protocol II of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons will take place later this year. It will consider several proposals addressing the scope of the Convention, compliance issues, small-calibre weapons and ammunition, anti-vehicle mines, and the problem of explosive remnants of war. The Secretary-General is committed to fulfilling his responsibilities as Depositary to both of these important legal instruments.

The global legal regime is particularly underdeveloped in the fields of conventional weapons; small arms and light weapons; the prevention of an arms race in outer space; and missiles and other delivery vehicles for weapons of mass destruction. Some of these problems, however, have been getting increased attention in recent years. General Assembly resolution 55/33 A has asked the Secretary-General to prepare a report, with the assistance of a panel of governmental experts, on the issue of missiles in all its aspects, and to submit this report to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session.

China has introduced in the Conference on Disarmament a proposal for a treaty banning the deployment of weapons in space. The Programme of Action successfully adopted at the July 2001 Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects provides a blueprint for international cooperation that may eventually lead to binding international norms. A question remains, however: will the events of 11 September encourage States to consider once again the need to prohibit the transfer of military-grade small arms and light weapons to non-State actors?

The chronic deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament — the world's single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum — is another serious problem that demands an urgent solution, one that will be found only in the political will of Member States to begin negotiations. Perhaps the new spirit of cooperation that has been rekindled by the events of 11 September will help to breathe new life into this vitally important international institution.

Despite the difficult challenges ahead for international peace and security, disarmament remains an attractive alternative to both deterrence and military defensive measures as responses to these challenges. One of the most important contributions of the United Nations in this field is the gathering and dissemination of information about worldwide progress in achieving important arms-limitation and disarmament goals. On behalf of Member States, the Department for Disarmament Affairs maintains the Register of Conventional Arms, which keeps track of the production and trade of seven categories of major weapons systems. This year more than 100 Governments made submissions to the Register, the highest level of participation since the Register was created nine years ago.

More Member States are also using the Standardized Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures. This year, nearly 60 have reported data using this instrument, almost double the average number from previous years. Last July, the States attending the United Nations small arms Conference assigned the Department for Disarmament Affairs the responsibility of collating and circulating data on the implementation of the Programme of Action agreed at that Conference. The Department's role as the coordination centre in the Secretariat of all United Nations activities in the field of small arms was specifically welcomed in General Assembly resolution 55/33 F.

As requested by the General Assembly, the Department is also working with a group of outside experts to prepare a study on disarmament and non-proliferation education, which the Secretary-General will submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session. Those experts have met twice this year and are making progress in identifying constructive initiatives

at the primary, secondary, university and postgraduate levels of education, in all regions of the world. Through its many symposiums, newsletters, databases, monographs, films, posters, brochures, lectures to student groups, and intern and fellowship programmes; a regularly updated web site; and its new 454-page annual *United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*, the Department for Disarmament Affairs is giving its educational responsibilities every bit of the attention they deserve, despite the heavy strain on its limited resources. I am glad to see some samples of the Department's publications on the desks of delegations.

I would like to take this occasion to invite all members of this Committee to attend a special symposium on "Terrorism and Disarmament" that the Department will host on the afternoon of 25 October, involving experts from the IAEA, the OPCW and other institutions. This timely event will examine the specific contributions that disarmament can make in addressing global terrorist threats.

This Committee faces the difficult task of moving beyond the tears, the grief and the anger from 11 September and from all acts of terrorism in all countries to the re-establishment of a just and stable foundation for international peace and security. The Committee must adhere to its long-standing priorities. It must keep its focus on discovering the ways and means of eliminating all weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons.

The Committee has before it many draft resolutions that point the way ahead in achieving this basic aim. As it considers these draft resolutions, member States may also wish to consider in their deliberations some broader questions that concern the disarmament machinery of the United Nations. Recent events, combined with the current crisis in multilateral disarmament diplomacy, may also suggest that the time has come to revisit the proposal to convene a fourth special session of the General Assembly on disarmament.

There is one question, however, that surely does not belong on this agenda. That is the question of whether the primary focus of this Committee should change from disarmament to merely the regulation or limitation of arms. There is, of course, an important need for efforts on both fronts. When it comes to weapons of mass destruction, there is no question that the world would be far better off pursuing the total and verifiable elimination of such weapons than in perpetuating the fantasy that their possession can be permanently limited to an assortment of exclusive, but by no means leak-proof clubs. By contrast, controls over conventional weapons are, in general, better pursued by transparent regulatory approaches that limit the numbers or characteristics of agreed weapons systems — approaches that are consistent with the inherent right of self-defence in Article 51 of the Charter. Together, both approaches complement each other well in serving the common interests of international peace and security.

Much ground has already been tilled. In their Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the States parties reaffirmed their common conviction that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, and that includes a terrorist use of nuclear weapons.

It is not at all unrealistic or inappropriate for this Committee to keep its focus on the search for absolute guarantees. The more it searches, the more it will return to disarmament, not regulation, as the solution for weapons of mass destruction. In addressing such weapons, the Committee should explore ways of bringing disarmament to the world or of bringing the world to disarmament. But disarmament must be done. Members of this Committee should ask not for whom the peace bell tolls — it tolls for them.

The Chairman: I thank Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, for his important and very inspiring statement. I am sure that this statement and his guidance will contribute significantly to the deliberations of this Committee.

Agenda items 64 to 84

General debate on all disarmament and international security items

Mr. Albin (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on behalf of my delegation, on your election as Chairman of this Committee. You can, of course, count on our full trust and support as you carry out the task entrusted to you. I also wish to express our appreciation to Ambassador Mya Than of Myanmar for the excellent way in which he guided the Committee's work at the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

I wish at the outset to join you in reiterating Mexico's strong condemnation of the terrorist attacks of 11 September in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania. Through you, I ask our friends and colleagues in the United States delegation to convey to the federal and local authorities, as well as to the relatives of the victims, the very sincere condolences and sense of solidarity of the Mexican delegation.

The situation we are facing today in the field of disarmament and international security underscores the urgent need to articulate an appropriate response to the new challenges. We must build consensuses and design new mechanisms based on rules and norms that effectively address the real needs of nations and societies facing non-traditional security threats.

We feel that the road ahead is clearly mapped out and consists in further developing and strengthening international law. Our response to the new challenges must be based on concrete actions that strengthen the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime and guarantee genuine security for nations and individuals.

Mexico is convinced of the need to make optimum use of the mechanisms and instruments at the disposal of the international community and the United Nations and to complement them, when necessary, by identifying concrete measures for achieving a new security based on cooperation. Strict respect for international law and accountability for commitments undertaken in the field of disarmament and security will be key elements of that response.

It has been over a year since we adopted by consensus the Final Document of the Sixth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in which nuclear-weapon States made an unequivocal commitment entirely to eliminate their nuclear arsenals and in which a series of practical measures were agreed upon with the goal of making systematic and steady progress towards nuclear disarmament.

We regret that the implementation of the measures agreed has been minimal or non-existent. No progress has been made in the negotiation of other important measures, such as pledges of non-first-use of nuclear weapons between nuclear-weapon States; legally binding security assurances of the non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States; the cancellation of the nuclear weapon state of alert; and the removal of nuclear warheads from their delivery systems.

Other pending matters include the negotiation of a legally binding instrument to regulate, monitor and prohibit the thousands of tactical nuclear weapons that, because of their technical characteristics, carry the greatest risk of accidental or improper use, and the involvement of the other nuclear-weapon States, in addition to the Russian Federation and the United States, in the nuclear disarmament process.

We share the conviction that the unilateral declarations made by those two countries in 1991 should be consolidated in a legally binding international instrument in order to make effective progress towards the reduction of the nuclear arsenals of the two countries. The First Committee can and should play a useful role in this respect.

Mexico wishes to emphasize that collective action by the international community is crucial for maintaining international peace and security, and that unilateral, bilateral and plurilateral measures in the area of nuclear disarmament must be complemented and strengthened by multilateral initiatives within the framework of legally binding international treaties of universal scope.

Despite the decision of the international community to give priority to the full implementation of the nuclear disarmament programme agreed upon in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the lack of progress is without doubt inconsistent with the unequivocal commitment undertaken by nuclear-weapons States to completely eliminate nuclear arsenals. The irreversibility of nuclear disarmament measures, transparency with respect to nuclear arsenals and nuclear programmes, and reports on the degree of compliance with commitments undertaken are still fully valid today as criteria for measuring progress made in this field.

The international debate on the development and deployment of anti-ballistic missile defence systems has further complicated the process of promoting understanding and easing tensions among nuclear-weapons States. The link that some countries have made between those programmes and the so-called international strategic stability has served to bog down multilateral negotiations on arms control and disarmament even further.

Mexico recognizes the importance of the 1972 Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems to the promotion and maintenance of international stability and as the basis for future reductions in strategic offensive weapons. We appeal to all States to refrain from taking any action that could trigger a new arms race.

We must abandon obsolete doctrines of deterrence and mutually assured destruction and recognize that the best way of promoting international stability is to eliminate nuclear weapons. Mexico therefore considers that the issue of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems is at the top of the agenda of international disarmament. Mexico will continue promoting the adoption of measures aimed at consolidating the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, among them, the universalization and full implementation of the various relevant international treaties. Mexico will also continue to promote the negotiation of new bilateral and multilateral agreements aimed at the complete elimination of nuclear weapons as a step towards the agreed goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

The creation of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of agreements freely entered into promotes global and regional peace and security, strengthens the nuclear non-proliferation regime and contributes to the achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Mexico supports the strengthening of the regimes established by the treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba, as well as the Antarctic Treaty, and reiterates its call on States that have not yet done so to ratify those treaties and their respective protocols. We wish to reiterate to the five States of Central Asia our support for a conclusion to their negotiations aimed at establishing a new nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region. We also encourage Mongolia to continue with the efforts it has undertaken in this area.

We also support a nuclear weapons free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas and the implementation of new measures to promote cooperation among the organs created under the treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, including the commencement of preparatory work for an international conference of States parties and signatories to those treaties in support of their common objectives.

Since the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, progress has been made towards its ratification. But new challenges have also emerged to global peace and security that pose obstacles to reaching the number of ratifications needed for its entry into force. The entry into force of the Treaty is one of the practical measures identified within the framework of the NPT to ensure constructive and steady progress towards nuclear disarmament and is a key element for evaluating the degree of compliance with the unequivocal commitments to completely eliminate nuclear weapons. In this context, there is a need for absolute and unqualified compliance with a total moratorium on any type of nuclear testing until the comprehensive ban provided for in the Treaty enters into force.

We are confident that the upcoming Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty will provide a favourable forum for the international community to reaffirm its support for the Treaty, as well as for efforts aimed at obtaining the number of ratifications needed for the Treaty's entry into force.

Mexico regrets that after more than six years of negotiations, during which the international community invested a great deal of effort and resources, it has not been possible to fulfil the mandate of the Ad Hoc Group of the States parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, which is to elaborate a protocol for verification of compliance with this legal instrument.

The international community shares the objective of strengthening the Convention through the design of a mechanism to verify compliance with all the provisions of the treaty, including measures to promote and implement the treaty. The next review conference must provide an opportunity to reaffirm the validity and force of the mandate of the Ad Hoc Group and to identify and determine the future course of action aimed at strengthening the Convention.

We reiterate our conviction that unilateral or partial verification and control regimes are insufficient and that multilateral negotiations undertaken within the framework of the Convention are the best means of preserving and strengthening the banning of biological weapons.

The recent United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects demonstrated the political will of Member States to combat the illicit trafficking in and manufacture of this type of weapon.

We would like to express our appreciation to all the delegations that demonstrated the flexibility needed to make possible the adoption of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. We would like in particular to congratulate Ambassador Camilo Reyes of Colombia for his patience, wisdom and tenacity, which were key factors in the successful outcome of the Conference.

The immediate task before us is the full implementation of the measures contained in the Programme of Action. We reiterate our readiness to undertake all bilateral, regional and international cooperation efforts so as to ensure such implementation.

We hope that discussions will continue between Member States on those issues that it was not possible to include in the Programme of Action. We are convinced that, to the extent that consensus can be reached on the need to deal with the issue of the prohibition of arms transfers to non-State actors and the issue of legislation on restrictions on the possession by civilians of small arms and light weapons, we will succeed in having a significant impact on the illicit trade in these weapons.

Since 1980, when the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons was adopted, Mexico has advocated the further refinement of that Convention by including the prohibition of certain categories of weapons that are not currently regulated, as well as incorporating a review mechanism. To this end, during the second Review Conference of the Convention, which is scheduled to take place in December, we will support amending the Convention in order to expand its scope of application and the adoption of new protocols to prohibit the production, stockpiling, use and transfer of conventional weapons which, by their nature or design, may have devastating humanitarian consequences, such as anti-vehicle mines and explosive remnants of war. We will also work towards the inclusion of an effective, strict and universal implementation mechanism.

At the Third Conference of the States Parties to the Ottawa Convention, it was noted that the number of countries producers of anti-personnel mines has declined; that exports of these arms had practically ceased, that more than 20 million mines had been destroyed in 55 countries, and that there had been a significant reduction in the number of victims and an increase in the level of resources allocated to action programmes to eradicate anti-personnel landmines.

Mexico appeals to the major producers of anti-personnel landmines to accede to the Convention and to the States parties to the Convention to conclude their mine destruction programmes within the established time frames, as well as to respect minimum thresholds for these weapons. Coordinated action by the international community is essential to achieve the complete elimination of anti-personnel landmines and to increase the level of financial resources available for activities related to the implemenation of the Convention.

The long-standing inability to reach agreement on a programme of work for the Conference on Disarmament, which was in evidence again this year, reflects the complexity and differences that exist with respect to the definition of priorities in the area of arms control and disarmament at the global level. This was shown by the fact that it was possible only to appoint special coordinators to deal with questions of procedure, despite the efforts and dedication of the then Chairman of the Conference.

Despite the mandate provided by numerous United Nations resolutions, and the urgent appeal issued by the sixth Review Conference of the NPT to establish subsidiary organs and begin negotiations on nuclear disarmament, fissile material and the prevention of an arms race in outer space, the absence of political will on the part of some States has paralysed the only multilateral negotiating body in the field of disarmament.

Recent events should lead us to reflect on the urgent need for the international negotiating machinery to function adequately in order to improve and strengthen the instruments on which the disarmament and non-proliferation regime and, thus, international security, is built.

Mexico issues an urgent appeal to all States to overcome the paralysis that has gripped the Conference on Disarmament. Such immobility is ethically

unsustainable. We must rediscover the political will to tackle the disarmament agenda in that forum so as to facilitate the negotiation of issues that, given the current international situation, must not be evaded. The future of international security will depend on the response to that appeal.

Mr. Krokhmal (Ukraine): At the outset, I should like, on behalf of the delegation of Ukraine, to convey to you, Sir, my warmest congratulations on your assumption of the chairmanship of this Committee, which plays an outstanding role within the United Nations disarmament machinery. I should also like to pay tribute to the members of the Bureau. You can count on the full support and cooperation of my delegation in the pursuit of a productive and successful session.

The current global peace and security environment presents a mixture of tremendous opportunities and grave challenges, as clearly evidenced by the recent developments in the world. In this regard, Ukraine expresses its profound indignation at the unprecedented terrorist acts perpetrated on 11 September in the United States. We strongly condemn those horrifying attacks and call on the members of the international community to unite and redouble their efforts with a view to combating terrorism in all its aspects. These tragic events have naturally focused the attention of Governments and the public on terrorism and the means used by terrorists. They have raised the question of how Governments can protect their countries and citizens against unconventional weapons and unconventional methods of warfare, whether employed by State or non-State actors.

In this context it is clear that the issues of non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament remain among the imperative priorities for humankind, as well as a critical element of the United Nations strategy for peace and security in the twenty-first century. These tasks will require collective efforts on the part of the international community. In our view, the First Committee can make a substantive contribution to such efforts.

Among the most important issues to which I believe we must draw specific attention during this session of the Committee are the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; the outcome of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); the resumption of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a fissile material cut-off treaty and a subsidiary body for substantive discussion of nuclear disarmament issues; the viability of the anti-ballistic missile Treaty; the future of the START process; the universalization of the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention and the implementation of the final document of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

In the light of the latest events, I deem it necessary to maintain the positive impetus given to international efforts in the field of nuclear non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament in the early 1990s and to overcome the regressive trends of the late 1990s in this sphere.

In this regard, I should mention Ukraine's essential contribution to the process of practical disarmament and to the maintenance of international peace and security. Having voluntarily given up its nuclear arsenal, Ukraine has proved itself to be a strong supporter of, and an active participant in, nuclear disarmament and the strategic arms elimination process.

Ukraine regards the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as a cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime and nuclear disarmament. Therefore, it is of critical importance to confirm the validity of the results achieved by the 2000 NPT Review Conference, which represents an important beginning in the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and includes an unequivocal commitment by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, leading to complete nuclear disarmament.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is generally recognized as one of the key elements of strategic stability in the world. I am pleased to mention that Ukraine ratified the CTBT last year. Our State stands for the further strengthening of the Treaty and urges all States to ratify this document, first and foremost those countries whose ratification is required for the Treaty's entry into effect.

We are convinced that the best way to achieve nuclear disarmament and to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons is to enhance the efficiency of the

NPT and CTBT Treaties and to make them universal. Ukraine believes that the universalization of the non-proliferation regime on the basis of these two Treaties should remain one of the priority tasks of the international agenda, since it will contribute greatly to the strengthening of peace and security all over the world.

It should also be mentioned that since the First Committee's previous session certain important events have taken place in Ukraine in the field of arms control and disarmament. The last inspection on Ukrainian territory was recently conducted within the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty framework.

Ukraine has also ratified the Memorandum of Understanding relating to the ABM Treaty, signed in New York in 1997. We are closely following developments relating to the ABM Treaty. Taking into account the fact that the Treaty played an important role in past decades in preserving strategic stability as part of a system of international legal documents, Ukraine proceeds on the basis of the need to ensure a non-conflict adaptation of the ABM Treaty in the context of the problems that arise from the continuing proliferation of missiles, missile technologies and weapons of mass destruction. We are convinced that the revision of the ABM Treaty must not result in deterioration of the general strategic situation or lead to a resumption of the arms race. Ukraine considers it exceptionally important that a mutual understanding be reached between the Russian Federation and the United States on this issue.

Bilateral nuclear negotiations between the United States and the Russian Federation are regarded by Ukraine as constituting the backbone of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. We believe that the implementation of the START II Treaty and the beginning of the START III process will pave the way towards further, deeper reductions in the nuclear arsenals of both sides.

Another step which would constitute an effective measure of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament is the conclusion of the fissile material cut-off treaty. Ukraine supports the resumption of negotiations on the cut-off treaty in the Conference on Disarmament, and urges States to show flexibility and to reconsider once again their positions in this area.

While great challenges still lie ahead of us, we would note in a positive vein a number of important developments, in particular, in combating illicit small arms trafficking and the proliferation of such weapons as well as in regard to the elimination of certain types of conventional weapons, including anti-personnel landmines.

The most remarkable event in this sphere was the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which was a unique opportunity for the international community to conduct a comprehensive analysis of this multifaceted problem and develop a strategy for coordinating collective efforts in that field. We welcome the Conference's final document, the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons. We believe that the process of implementing the Programme of Action will require the common efforts of all Member States and their civil societies, as well as of international and regional organizations. We need to draw priority attention to the enhancement of the effectiveness of the Security Council's arms embargoes, the establishment of effectively functioning national export control systems and the strengthening of international cooperation between border, customs and law enforcement bodies.

I also highly commend the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons, which could constitute a significant step towards the elaboration and implementation of global measures in this area.

We welcome the adoption of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the International Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Bearing in mind the transnational nature of this problem, we are deeply convinced that the United Nations should continue to play a leading role in the fight against the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, as well as in restraining their proliferation.

The year 2001 has become a landmark for Ukraine in terms of initiating the process of the destruction of its huge anti-personnel landmine stockpiles. As a signatory State to the Ottawa Convention on the total ban of anti-personnel landmines, Ukraine remains devoted to the Convention's ideals, as is clearly evidenced by its

consequent policy in the sphere of anti-personnel landmine destruction.

In conclusion, let me express our hope that this session will give further momentum to the ongoing international efforts towards the total elimination of all nuclear weapons and towards limiting the numbers of conventional weapons to the minimum levels required for self-defence, thus paving the way to a more secure and safer world. We believe that the First Committee will continue to play an outstanding role in this direction.

Mr. Nene (South Africa): I have the honour of taking the floor on behalf of the delegations of the New Agenda Initiative countries: Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa and Sweden.

First let me congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption at the chair of the First Committee at this year's session.

On behalf of the New Agenda delegations, we reiterate our condemnation of the unspeakable terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September. We share the sense of outrage and pain, especially for the loss of so many innocent lives.

I now have the honour to present the content of a communiqué released this morning by the Foreign Ministers of the New Agenda countries:

> "The Foreign Ministers of Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa and Sweden have, in their preparation for the fifty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly, evaluated progress on nuclear disarmament and considered further measures to be taken in pursuit of their joint initiative to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world.
>
> "They recalled the substantial outcome of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). They noted with satisfaction the level of support given to the New Agenda resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 20 November 2000. They also recalled the constructive dialogue with the nuclear-weapon States that was started at the 2000 NPT Review Conference and agreed to continue this dialogue with a view to accelerating negotiations on all fronts, leading to nuclear disarmament.
>
> "The New Agenda Ministers were determined to pursue the complete implementation of the agreements reached at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. That outcome provides the requisite blueprint to achieve nuclear disarmament. Further progress on disarmament must be a major determinant in achieving and sustaining international stability.
>
> "The Ministers made it clear that they remain deeply concerned at the continuing possibility that nuclear weapons could be used. They welcomed the indications of further cuts by the United States and the Russian Federation to their nuclear arsenals. They noted that, despite past achievements in bilateral and unilateral reductions, the total number of nuclear weapons deployed and stockpiled still amounts to tens of thousands.
>
> "The Ministers also expressed their concern that the commitment to diminish the role of nuclear weapons in security policies and defence doctrines had not so far been pursued. This lack of progress is inconsistent with the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to achieve the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. And, in the context of disarmament, it clearly represents a failure to grasp the opportunities of the post-cold-war security environment.
>
> "The Ministers reaffirmed that any presumption of the indefinite possession of nuclear weapons by the nuclear-weapon States would be incompatible with the integrity and sustainability of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and with the broader goal of the maintenance of international peace and security.
>
> "The seven Ministers looked forward to the resumption in 2002 of the NPT review process, where States would need to account for progress in achieving nuclear disarmament. Accountability will be assessed in the context of the reports that States parties have agreed to submit. To date, there have been few advances in the implementation of the 13 steps agreed to at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. A particular disappointment was the continuing failure of the Conference on Disarmament to deal with nuclear disarmament and to resume negotiations on fissile

material. The expectations of progress that had come in 2000 have not yet been met.

"The Ministers expressed concern at challenges to the non-proliferation regime. They urged the international community to redouble its efforts to achieve universal adherence to the NPT and not to take any steps that would undermine the determination of the international community to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. They repeated their call on those three States — India, Pakistan and Israel — which are not parties to the NPT and which operate unsafeguarded nuclear facilities, to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States and to place their facilities under the comprehensive International Atomic Energy Agency agreements.

"The Ministers stressed that the participation of the international community as a whole is central to the maintenance and enhancement of international peace and stability. International security is a collective concern requiring collective engagement. They emphasised that unilateral and bilateral nuclear disarmament measures complement the treaty-based multilateral approach towards nuclear disarmament. They underlined also that internationally negotiated treaties in the field of disarmament have made a fundamental contribution to international peace and security. The importance of early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty remained crucial in this context.

"Ministers emphasised the imperative of irreversibility in arms control. They expressed the view that international treaties in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation must be respected and that all obligations flowing from those treaties must be duly fulfilled.

"Ministers stressed the importance of the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (ABM Treaty) in the promotion and maintenance of international stability and as a basis for further reductions of strategic offensive weapons. Abrogation of the ABM Treaty could hold grave consequences for the future of global security. Further reductions of nuclear arsenals to lower limits must not be put at risk. They called upon all States to refrain from any action that could lead to a new nuclear arms race or that could impact negatively on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

"The Ministers reaffirmed their determination to pursue the New Agenda initiative with continued vigour. They agreed that the priority would be to pursue their initiative in the context of the forthcoming NPT review process beginning in 2002. The 2000 NPT undertakings on nuclear disarmament had been given. Implementation of them was now imperative."

On behalf of the New Agenda partners, I request that the ministerial communiqué be circulated as an official document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. A copy has been provided to the Secretariat for this purpose.

The Chairman: I have taken due note of the request of the representative of South Africa and I will take the necessary steps to have the ministerial communiqué of the New Agenda partners circulated as an official document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Babaa (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of this important Committee. I wish you every success. We are certain that our debate will be crowned with success, thanks to your skill, expertise and the efforts of the excellent team that comprises the Bureau to help you fulfil your tasks. My delegation wishes to assert its readiness to fully cooperate with you to ensure the success of your work.

We wish also to express our appreciation to Mr. Dhanapala, the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, for his thorough statement and to thank him for his efforts on behalf of the cause of disarmament throughout the world.

We are commencing our general debate in this session in a sad environment, following the tragic terrorist attack that we all witnessed on 11 September. On this occasion my delegation wishes once again to express its condolences and sympathy to the people of America and the families of the victims. The entire world condemned the bloody, horrible events of 11 September.

What is important is to fight international terrorism not only through armed force but also by

dealing with the causes and motivations that lead to terrorism. Terrorism is a vicious circle that needs to be strangled at the source.

This disaster teaches us lessons, as has been said by our Rapporteur, who is from Sierra Leone, regarding unconventional weapons that we may or may not be familiar with. Such weapons are more dangerous than nuclear weapons. Weapons of mass destruction and anti-ballistic missile systems can be ineffective or useless, because conflicts have changed in character. It is therefore necessary to adopt urgent strategies and policies within the context of the United Nations and without the use of double standards in order to examine the causes of conflicts and instability and resolve them once and for all. We need to clearly define international terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, which must be vigorously condemned and distinguish between it and the legitimate struggle of oppressed people against foreign occupation of their national territories.

We feel that regional, national and international conflicts and disparities in the world order have an impact on our global village, which is becoming increasingly globalized. Insecurity, conflict, environmental disasters, malnutrition, poverty, famine, epidemics, racism, occupation and repression all affect the world as a whole, and no country can be sheltered from these scourges. It also means that concerted efforts must be made to find political ways, and determination, to deal with these questions. If a fire breaks out in our global village, it is necessary for all to unite efforts to put it out before the flames extend to other parts of the village.

In their Millennium Declaration our Heads of State and Government committed themselves to eliminating weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, in order to reduce the universal dangers posed by light weapons and anti-personnel mines. As was said in paragraph 75 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/56/1),

> "Uncertainties about the status of the strategic relationship between the leading nuclear-weapon Powers and continuing divergence of views among States on priorities and perspectives, however, continue to inform the debate and block further movement on global security and disarmament."

Despite international efforts to achieve progress in disarmament — either in nuclear weapons or small light weapons — global military expenditures are still increasing, and the annual costs now exceed $800 billion, or $130 per person on our planet. Other reports indicate that the trade in weapons increased for the third consecutive year, by 8 per cent last year. Expenditures totalled $36.9 billion. For the United States alone, the figure is $18.6 billion, which is one half of all sales. Sixty-eight percent of these sales are directed to developing countries, the majority of which suffer from poverty, famine, diseases and severe lack of official development assistance.

In the Arab region, military expenditures have increased consistently. The region has received 38 per cent of its imports in weapons. This occurred despite the fact that resources devoted to development had to be diverted. This means that the resources devoted to development have been diverted to the acquisition of weapons for defence because of the presence of a cruel, aggressive, brutal entity forcefully implanted in the region, possessing conventional and nuclear weapons, and other weapons of mass destruction. This entity is determined to further expand and pursue its policies of oppression, occupation and settlement-building. It is opposed to all international efforts. It refuses to go along with international treaties and instruments and to adhere to the Non-Proliferation Treaty; just as it opposes making the area a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Furthermore, the land of this entity has become the largest arsenal and arms depot in the world.

The process of disarmament is going through a real crisis in view of the accumulation of nuclear weapons and the absence of effective measures to restore practical confidence in the area of conventional weapons. The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms is a very important measure to consolidate trust and needs to be broadened to ensure transparency so that it can obtain global information on conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, and can become more global and more balanced.

We support the efforts of the international community to resolve the problem of landmines, from which more than 70 countries, including my own, are suffering. The world in its entirety has expressed broad concern about this invisible enemy, which not only threatens the lives of thousands of children and women but also causes major economic, social and environmental damage in many countries. A few days ago, and as a follow-up action, the Third Meeting of

the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction was held in Managua. We ask that all international treaties on disarmament, including the Ottawa Convention, be amended, because certain essential provisions are missing, including the legal responsibility of countries that have planted landmines on the territory of other countries and the rights of the damaged countries to compensation.

My country was a battlefield during the Second World War, and millions of mines were laid on our territory. We have suffered the consequences of that war through no fault of our own. Our situation is different from that of other countries that suffer from landmines laid as a result of local and regional conflicts or a foreign occupation. The Ottawa Convention makes no distinction between the legitimate use of landmines for legitimate self-defence against strong aggressor countries and those irresponsibly used by other belligerent States possessing all sorts of weapons of mass destruction. In this regard, we wish to underscore the fact that international efforts to eliminate landmines are faltering, and the countries suffering from them are in need of the necessary resources to modernize their local capacities to dispose of mines and to help rehabilitate and reintegrate victims.

We support efforts to create nuclear-weapon-free zones on the various continents of the world. This is an important step towards achieving nuclear disarmament. We call upon the world to make greater efforts to create new nuclear-weapon-free zones. We also stress the importance of making the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Over a year has passed since the call was made in that regard at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and numerous relevant General Assembly resolutions have been adopted. However, the Tel Aviv regime is not respecting the appeals of the international community and is refusing to abide by the NPT to rid the region of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction. That regime is also refusing to place its nuclear weapons under inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency. If international efforts fail to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, then the international community will have failed in its drive for nuclear disarmament.

We also stress the need to commit ourselves to the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM), a major element in international peace and security. We believe that the unilateral abolition of this Treaty and the argument for developing a national missile defence system by the one super-Power under the pretext that it would protect one country from the missiles of another is a false one. It is simply a pretext to ensure the hegemony and domination of a major Power on earth and in outer space, which would jeopardize peace and strategic balance throughout the world and would lead us back to the cold war and the arms race. This initiative also has a negative impact on national security in our own Arab region vis-à-vis the strategic alliance established between the major Power in question and the Tel Aviv regime and the policy declared by that Power, namely, that it would act to ensure the Tel Aviv regime's qualitative military superiority in the region.

The United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which was held in this room this year, pointed to the need for serious international efforts against trafficking in these lethal weapons. The Conference also shed light on aspects of those weapons that serve to exacerbate regional conflicts and ethnic cleansing and the proliferation and gravity of civil wars. As we can see currently in various parts of the world, there is also a need to emphasize that this trade leads to smuggling, organized crime and trafficking in drugs. Studies show that 90 per cent of the people killed during the last decade died as a result of the proliferation of these arms.

We welcome the United Nations Programme of Action that has been approved to ban trafficking and distribution of these weapons with a view to combating and eliminating this problem. We believe that the Programme is a first step in the right direction. In this regard, we praise the important role played by the President of the Conference. We also wish to pay tribute to the role played by the Ambassador of Mozambique as Chairman of the Preparatory Committee. At the same time, we also want to express our disappointment over the fact that the Conference did not succeed in reflecting the international community's determination to solve this problem by virtue of not being able to reach agreement on other issues that were put forward at the Conference. Among those issues was registering and monitoring the

possession of small arms and banning sales of those arms to small groups. We call upon the international community to implement the principal recommendations of the Conference, and we call upon the State that did not approve of those issues to review its position so as to reach international agreement on, at long last, imposing a definitive and comprehensive international ban on the trade in these deadly weapons.

We would like to say once again that small States that do not possess advanced weapons or weapons of mass destruction have the right to possess small arms, as they are the only weapons available to them to equip their forces for legitimate self-defence and to guarantee their domestic security.

We attach great importance to strengthening security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region. We support every effort to make the region a bridge for cooperation between Europe, North Africa and the Middle East on the basis of the principles of equality, mutual respect for each country's sovereignty and non-intervention in the internal affairs of others. We positively respond to calls for cooperation in confronting and resolving the problems faced by the countries of the region — including terrorism, organized crime and illicit trafficking in small arms, light weapons and drugs.

Ending occupation and recognizing the rights of oppressed peoples, lifting brutal sanctions imposed on some peoples in the region, the withdrawal of military fleets and foreign bases and strengthening cooperation at all levels between States with coastal borders — all these measures have the capacity to transform the region that served as the cradle of civilization into an area of prosperity, peace and security.

In conclusion, I wish to refer to the introduction of the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization presented at this session. I wish specifically to refer to the passage in which he stresses the importance of the Organization's role in the area of disarmament and security as being an integral part of the United Nations international responsibility, and to the part in which he draws the attention of the international community to the importance of preventing conflict and fully understanding its causes.

I wish moreover to add that all those who wish to see the establishment of a new international order free from the threat of war and weapons of mass destruction should adopt policies based on a single standard: policies that are more just and equitable with respect to the cause of oppressed peoples aspiring to equality, to dignity and to justice in a new world of the third millennium, a world in which friendship, peace and brotherhood will prevail.

Mr. Estévez-López (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): With this general debate, we formally commence the work of the First Committee at the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. The Committee is honoured, Sir, to have you as its Chairman. We are certain that your experience and skill will enable our work to attain the success we all desire within the time allotted to us. Allow me, therefore, to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your election. We assure you in advance that you can count on my delegation for all the support we may be called upon to provide.

The current session of the General Assembly has opened in a special framework arising from a series of events, the most telling of which for the work of the First Committee were the Millennium Summit, held at the beginning of the fifty-fifth session, the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held last July, and the infamous terrorist attacks that dealt such a heavy blow to our host country just a few weeks ago.

Last year, in our statement in the Committee's general debate, we expressed our belief that we should pause for a moment to reflect on our work and realize that it is not the Committee's interests or the prospects for its continuing existence that will be advanced or impaired by what we achieve or fail to achieve here: it is the interests of all humankind that will be promoted or set back.

We added that, although there may appear to be some exaggeration in putting it this way, there can be no denying that what we are talking about here is putting an end to the manufacture, and working towards the dismantling, of weapons that threaten the safety and the life of all human beings: the representatives who are sitting in this room as well as the billions of our brothers and sisters outside it. Time and again my delegation has stressed how important it is for the resolutions we adopt and the ideals for which we strive to be backed by the political will without which they cannot be translated into reality.

Guatemala realizes that such messages are often considered to be out of place in bodies such as this one,

where solutions to the problems before it are expected to be sought with a sense of realism. And that is where the difficulty lies, for it is thought that realistic action must exclude values. In the name of realism, there have been attempts to drive moral values and the rule of law out of the political scene at both the national and the international levels. Nothing could be more misguided, for neither moral values nor legal norms have ever held back the development of peoples or hindered harmonious coexistence. The grievous events of 11 September were, in part, the result of a divorce between political action on the one hand and morality and law on the other.

With its aftermath of pain and destruction, terrorism is a threat that hovers over all humankind. Its mere existence should make us redouble our efforts to make progress in disarmament and international security. Now, more than ever before, it is imperative to put an end to the manufacture and stockpiling of nuclear, chemical, biological, bacteriological and all other weapons that, far from guaranteeing the right of States to self-defence, only endanger the existence of our peoples.

It is likewise necessary that we review all that pertains to the manufacture, stockpiling, sale and circulation of conventional weapons, small arms and light weapons, anti-personnel mines, ammunition and all explosive devices, to prevent them, to the extent possible, from falling into the hands of individuals or groups eager to use them in the most ruthless fashion, for the sole purpose of sowing destruction and chaos.

Although, to be sure, the results of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects were a step forward towards combating and eliminating the problem, they failed to meet fully the expectations of most of the participants, particularly those of us who here represent nations that have suffered first-hand the destructive effects of small arms and light weapons.

Guatemala considers that now more than ever it is necessary to review all that has been done on armaments of all types and on international security. We must take stock of the accomplishments and failures in the United Nations struggle to promote disarmament, so that on that basis we can take the action required to consolidate measures to secure for world society the human right to live and to develop in peace.

That is why we urge a redoubled effort to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in regions that are still without them. Because it is in a region that is free of those weapons, Guatemala recognizes the benefits that such zones bring and believes that all peoples are entitled to them. We also appeal to States whose ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is needed for the Treaty to come into force to shoulder their responsibility to the international community.

We further appeal to all countries to pursue the fight against the trade in, and the stockpiling and illegal manufacture of small arms and light weapons, which provide a protective mantle for other unlawful activities, including drug trafficking and terrorism to name but two.

Finally, we urge the United Nations as a whole and the Department for Disarmament Affairs in particular to pursue the process of strengthening the regional centres for which they are responsible. These provide and will continue to provide significant support in achieving the goals towards which we are striving with a view to solving the difficult problems on the First Committee agenda.

Mr. Valdés (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish on behalf of the countries members of the Rio Group to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. Our congratulations go also to the other members of the Bureau.

The scale of the terrorist acts committed in the United States last month requires that we reflect on ways of strengthening international security. These acts represent concrete threats that affect us all by eroding the very foundations of the social order and the international system.

We wish, therefore, to reiterate what was said in the communiqué of the countries members of the Rio Group about the acts committed on 11 September. In that communiqué, we expressed our solidarity with the Government and the people of the United States, and we underscored the need to ensure that such acts of international terrorism do not go unpunished and that the applicable norms of international and criminal law are enforced.

The countries members of the Rio Group agree with the view expressed by the Secretary-General concerning the need to undertake additional efforts to

prevent terrorist acts using weapons of mass destruction. We are convinced that the measures suggested by the Secretary-General in the plenary of the General Assembly should be given due consideration by Member States.

In this regard, we support the holding of a debate on the actions needed to achieve universality for treaties related to weapons of mass destruction, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; the promotion of cooperation between international organizations concerned with such weapons; the prohibition of the sale of small arms and light weapons to non-State actors; progress towards the eradication of anti-personnel mines; improvement of the physical protection of nuclear and chemical installations; and the elaboration of strategies to deal with terrorist threats using electronic means that have implications for international peace and security.

Through the Santiago Declaration of August this year, the heads of State and Government of the countries members of the Rio Group stated their position on a series of issues that we consider to be of fundamental importance in the field of disarmament and international security. These and other relevant issues are the ones that we wish to raise here today in this forum.

We wish to reiterate how important it is for the entire international community to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. In the light of the forthcoming Second Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, we wish to invite all those States that have not yet signed or ratified the Treaty to do so as soon as possible.

The countries members of the Rio Group note with concern that no progress has been made towards the full implementation of the 13 measures to achieve nuclear disarmament contained in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. We appeal to all States, in particular the nuclear-weapon States, to honour the commitments undertaken in article VI of the Treaty and in the Final Document of the Conference.

In this connection also, we wish to underscore the importance of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and of its organization — the Organization for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) — which has been entrusted with the task of ensuring the fulfilment of the objective of consolidating the first nuclear-weapon-free inhabited region of the planet.

We consider that the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones is one of the most significant advances in the field of disarmament in the last few decades. In our view, the consolidation and expansion of such zones contributes in a decisive manner to the building of a more stable and secure world. As representatives of the first region of the world to have prohibited nuclear weapons, we support the initiative to promote the gradual development of a nuclear-weapon-free zone that would include the southern hemisphere and adjacent areas to the north of the Equator, where applicable in conformity with specific treaties. We therefore appeal to the international community to reaffirm its support for efforts aimed at the creation of such a zone.

In this regard, we also encourage the five States of Central Asia in their initiative to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region.

In the context of the peaceful use of nuclear energy and its relationship to international security, we wish to stress the importance that should be attached to the security aspects of the international maritime transport of radioactive wastes.

We note that at the beginning of the year it was reported that this type of waste was once again being transported along the coasts and navigable waterways of countries members of the Rio Group. We therefore reiterate our concern at the risks that these activities pose to the health of the coastal populations and to the ecosystems of the marine and Antarctic environment. Special attention should also be paid to the situation of island developing countries, because of their particular vulnerability in the event of disasters or accidents.

All of these concerns have been expressed in the communiqué of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Rio Group in March of this year, which was circulated as document A/56/360 under the item "Prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes".

Consequently, while we welcome the progress made over the past few years in specialized forums on these issues, in particular resolution GC(45)/28, adopted recently by the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency, we urge the international community to continue to work towards

supplementing and refining the international legal order on security that is applicable in such cases.

In the efforts being made by the international community to control and eliminate the danger of weapons of mass destruction, the Chemical Weapons Convention represents a model instrument on account of its non-discriminatory nature, the balance that it establishes between disarmament and non-proliferation, and the system that it introduces for international cooperation in this field for peaceful purposes.

Because of these characteristics, this Convention has an undoubtedly universal nature. We note also that sustained progress has been made in its implementation, and we are confident that the recent agreement signed between the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the United Nations will contribute not only to strengthening efforts to ensure the universality of the Convention, but also to the ultimate objective, which is the total elimination of these weapons of mass destruction from the face of the earth.

On the other hand, the countries members of the Rio Group regret the lack of progress towards the conclusion of a protocol for the verification of the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological Weapons. We hope that at the next review conference of the Convention, the mandate of the Ad Hoc Working Group will be renewed, so that negotiations can continue with a view to finalizing the elaboration of that international juridical instrument.

We wish to reaffirm the need to strengthen confidence-building measures and measures to enhance cooperation in the area of defence, as well as the importance of undertaking defence expenditures with maximum transparency and with the full knowledge of the public. This includes the coordination of the broad participation of our countries in the system of information on the acquisition of conventional weapons of the United Nations and of the Organization of American States, as well as periodic information on military expenditures, in accordance with the resolutions adopted by the United Nations and the quest for formulas to standardize their accounting systems.

In this connection, we take note with interest of the study undertaken by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, on behalf of Argentina and Chile, on the establishment of a standardized common methodology to measure defence expenditures, as well as of the initiative adopted recently by Chile and Peru in this respect.

We are firmly convinced of the need to adopt measures that will contribute to the effective and gradual limitation and control of defence expenditures in the region, so that more resources will become available for the economic and social development of our peoples.

We wish to take this opportunity to highlight the important work being done by Argentina as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission's Working Group on Confidence-Building Measures. We hope that the Working Group can bring its work to a successful conclusion at its substantive session of 2002.

We share the view that it is urgently necessary to achieve the universalization of the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. We support the results of the Third Review Conference of the States parties, which was held in Managua, Nicaragua, last September, and which are contained in the corresponding Declaration. We wish to take this opportunity to highlight the commitment that we have undertaken to convert our region into a zone free of this type of weapon.

We further wish to express our firm intention to prevent, combat and eliminate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons at the national, subregional, regional and global levels and to take measures to promote international cooperation and assistance.

We therefore support the Programme of Action adopted at the United Nations Conference held in July, which complements the progress achieved in our region in that field. The countries members of the Rio Group are determined to ensure follow-up to the Conference. To that end, we have organized a seminar, to be held in Santiago, Chile, in November. We also wish to take this opportunity to note the successful work done by Colombia in the chairmanship of the Conference.

The countries members of the Rio Group wish to express their firm support for and appreciation of the activities being undertaken by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, based in Lima, Peru, for its assistance to regional

disarmament initiatives, for encouraging debates on security and for its contribution to the coordination of United Nations efforts to promote peace and security in the region.

Mr. Goussous (Jordan): Allow me first to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to guide the work of the First Committee. I also wish to express our appreciation to Ambassador Mya Than of Myanmar for the excellent way in which he conducted the work of the First Committee during the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly. I also congratulate the other members of the Bureau. I would like to assure you that you will have my delegation's full support in ensuring an outcome that will meet our expectations.

On behalf of the delegation of Jordan, I wish to convey our deepest sympathy and condolences to the Government and people of the United States of America, to the people of New York and Washington, D.C., and to the families of the bereaved who suffered great emotional, physical and moral losses as a result of the acts of barbarism perpetrated against the World Trade Center buildings on the 11 September.

The First Committee meets this year against the backdrop of remarkable achievements as well as serious challenges in the field of international security and disarmament. On the remarkable achievements side of the balance sheet, we are approaching universal access on four legal instruments: first, the ratification by 83 States parties of the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction; secondly, the forthcoming Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty after the deposition of instruments of ratification by 79 States, which represents an increase of 50 per cent over the number of ratifications at the time of the Conference held in 1999; thirdly, the continued work of the Ad Hoc Group of the States parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, aimed at establishing a verification and compliance regime for the Convention; and, fourthly, the adoption of and adherence by many States to a Model Protocol Additional to the existing Safeguards Agreements between member States and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

On the other side of the balance sheet, we regrettably find such negative developments and situations as the ongoing reluctance by the only State in the Middle East with considerable nuclear-weapon capabilities, Israel, to adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to place all its nuclear installations and facilities under full-scope safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency; the continued reluctance of the nuclear-weapon States to meet their obligations in compliance with article VI of the NPT by pursuing negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament; the failure to reach agreement on the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament; and the failure so far to take practical steps towards broadening the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms to encompass military holdings and procurement through national production, as well as stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons.

Jordan has always been committed to the cause of international peace and security. We have over the years advocated a peaceful settlement to the conflict in the Middle East that could lead to just, comprehensive and durable peace in the region. We have come to realize, as have many others within and outside the region, that for durable peace to be achieved, positive steps towards confidence-building between the parties would have to be taken, in addition to such steps as freeing the region of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction.

Jordan has adhered to the Chemical Weapons Convention, ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, ratified the Ottawa Convention on anti-personnel landmines and signed with the IAEA an Additional Protocol for safeguards. In so doing, Jordan has completed its adherence to all international instruments providing for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and for the prohibition of other weapons of mass destruction, including chemical and biological weapons. It is noteworthy in this context that the General Assembly has, over the last two decades, called upon all States in the Middle East that have not yet done so, particularly the only State in the region with nuclear-weapon capabilities, to adhere without delay to the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty and to place all its nuclear facilities under the full-scope safeguards of the IAEA. All the States in the Middle East, except Israel, are now parties to the NPT.

Since 1974, the General Assembly has called for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and the resolution on that subject has

gained further momentum since 1980 by being adopted by consensus. Furthermore, in the resolution on the Middle East, adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and at the 2000 NPT Review Conference, the States parties called upon all States in the region to

> "take practical steps in appropriate forums aimed at making progress towards, inter alia, the establishment of an effectively verifiable Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems, and to refrain from taking any measures that preclude the achievement of this objective". (*NPT/CONF.2000/7, annex, para. 5*)

Paragraph 6 of the same resolution calls upon all States party to the NPT, and in particular the nuclear-weapon States, to extend their cooperation and to exert their utmost efforts with a view to ensuring the achievement of that goal. Unfortunately, more than six years after the historic 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and almost two years after the 2000 NPT Review Conference, no indication of such efforts has so far been felt in the region.

We cannot but reiterate our conviction, as we have time and again, that the outlook for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East is too gloomy without confidence-building between the parties involved. Confidence, however, can never be attainable with the existence of nuclear weapons in the region and without the abolition of the theory of nuclear deterrence.

As far as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is concerned, we are encouraged by the fact that 150 States have signed the treaty so far, 79 States have ratified it and 21 have deposited instruments of ratification. We join other member States that have called on all countries which have not yet done so, particularly those 44 States whose ratification is needed for the Treaty to come into force, to sign and ratify the Treaty.

We are also encouraged by negotiations aimed at the conclusion of a non-discriminatory and universally applicable convention banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. Jordan has on many occasions reiterated the importance of a fissile material cut-off treaty as a significant step towards the achievement of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. On the other hand, we regret that the Conference on Disarmament has failed to agree on its programme of work for the last five years and to start constructive negotiations on the treaty, among other things.

Last July, the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects achieved important progress. The Conference attracted widespread attention, with the world's media reporting extensively on the cost of and carnage caused by these weapons.

Civil society groups from across the globe were deeply and creatively involved. After tense and difficult negotiations, Member States forged a consensus among diverse views and interests and adopted a comprehensive Programme of Action; we call for it to be fully implemented as soon as possible.

Faced with the global scourge of small arms, the international community has now begun an important process of constructive global action. States have committed themselves to developing, strengthening and implementing norms and measures aimed at preventing, fighting and, ultimately, eradicating the illicit manufacture of and trade in small arms and light weapons. They agreed to place special emphasis on post-conflict situations and, in particular, to provide greater support to programmes for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, including child ex-combatants. They also agreed to act responsibly in the areas of export, import, transit and re-transfer of weapons, since legal weapons all too often and all too easily find their way into the hands of terrorists, criminals and drug traffickers.

States recognized the need for marking and for keeping accurate records that will enable timely tracing and identification. States agreed to destroy illicit or surplus weapons as necessary. The Programme of Action calls for greater cooperation and for education and public awareness programmes.

These are significant first steps in alleviating a grave threat to international peace and security. We must now consolidate these gains. A programme of action is a beginning, not an end in itself. Implementation will be the true test.

Jordan has been a staunch supporter of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. We regard the Register as an indispensable mechanism for achieving transparency in armaments, which leads to confidence-

building, especially in conflict-prone regions such as the Middle East. However, we believe that the Register may not be effective unless its scope is enlarged to include military holdings and procurement through national production, as well as weapons of mass destruction, in particular, nuclear weapons. We therefore regret that the Panel of Governmental Experts failed to deal with this problem.

As I outlined earlier, Jordan has ratified the Ottawa Convention on anti-personnel landmines. This step has reaffirmed our commitment to help eliminate this most excessively injurious and inhumane weapon, which has indiscriminate effects, especially on children and other innocent civilians. Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan, in her capacity as patron of the Landmine Survivors Network, is leading and contributing to the worldwide campaign to rid the world of anti-personnel landmines.

Finally, I would like to conclude my remarks by quoting the late President Dwight Eisenhower, who said,

> "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its labourers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children."

Mr. Lint (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries of Cyprus and Malta, as well as the European Free Trade Association country member of the European Economic Area, Norway, align themselves with this statement.

Allow me to congratulate you most sincerely, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. The European Union wishes to assure you of its wholehearted support in the discharge of your important responsibilities.

I would like to begin by referring to the events of 11 September, which have left us deeply shocked. The European Union condemns all forms of terrorism. It expresses its solidarity with the American people and the Government of the United States of America. It considers that disarmament and non-proliferation on a multilateral and general basis are more necessary than ever today in order to prevent terrorists and their organizations from having any access to more powerful means of conducting their abhorrent activities.

The European Union will continue to give its wholehearted support to international efforts in the areas of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation, regarding both weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems is a major problem and is a matter of concern. The European Union calls for a continuing commitment on the part of the international community in the fight against such proliferation and in the efforts to achieve disarmament. The Göteborg meeting of the European Council in June 2001 emphasized that the strengthening of international norms and political instruments for preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems is of prime importance to the Union, which is committed to strengthening multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation instruments.

For the European Union, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. In this spirit, we support and encourage the implementation of the objectives laid down in the Treaty and the decisions of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and the results achieved by the 2000 Review Conference, as expressed in the Final Document adopted by consensus at the latter Conference. The countries of the European Union are determined to take part in their full implementation.

It is necessary to step up efforts to continue implementing the results of the NPT Review Conference held in 2000. In this context, the Union welcomes indications from the United States and the Russian Federation that they are actively working to bring about a considerable reduction in their nuclear arsenals. It is of the utmost importance that these reductions be verifiable and irreversible. The Union calls on all States to make a success of the upcoming session of the Committee, in 2002, the first such session since the Review Conference.

The European Union believes that universal accession is necessary in order to consolidate the objective of ensuring non-proliferation and disarmament worldwide. Consequently, the European Union calls on the four States that have not yet done so to accede to the NPT.

In this year when we are celebrating the fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by the General Assembly, on 10 September 1996, the Union wishes to reiterate that it has spared no effort in promoting the early entry into force of the Treaty and universal accession to it. It has made over 70 representations and has also argued in support of the Treaty in all the appropriate international forums. It is firmly committed to persevering in this effort. It is with this in mind that the Union reiterates its full support for the efforts to establish the verification regime rapidly and in accordance with the Treaty. To ensure that the resolve of the international community does not weaken, it calls on all the States that have not yet done so to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty without delay and unconditionally, particularly the 13 States on the list of 44 States whose ratification is required for the Treaty to enter into force. We welcome the ratification, since the last session of the General Assembly, by Benin, Croatia, Guyana, the Holy See, Malta, Namibia, the Philippines, Saint Lucia, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Ukraine and Uruguay.

In line with the commitments that they assumed by signing and ratifying the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the European Union member States remain committed to the full implementation of the verification regime and the early entry into force of the Treaty. In this respect, the European Union wishes to recall the statement made by the United States at the fifteenth session of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Preparatory Commission on 21 August. While noting with satisfaction the intention of the United States to maintain its moratorium on nuclear tests, we can only regret its announcement that it will no longer take part in certain activities arising from the Treaty and that it is not intending to review its position regarding ratification. That is a matter of concern for us, especially since the United States has, to date, played an important role in nuclear arms control, particularly in the framework of the CTBT.

The negotiation at the Conference on Disarmament of a non-discriminatory and universal treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosives (FMCT) constitutes an essential stage in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. The European Union regrets that a consensus has not yet been reached in the Conference on Disarmament that would permit the start of negotiations on the issue in accordance with the mandate approved in 1995. We reiterate our call to the members of the Conference on Disarmament to make every effort to attain that objective as soon as possible. The appointment of three Special Coordinators to review the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament, to consider the expansion of its membership and to study the improvement of the efficiency of its functioning may contribute to improving the atmosphere within the Conference. Although limited in scope, this procedural decision might constitute the first step in a gradual process of working towards the adoption of a work programme.

The European Union calls for the continuation of the work of the Special Coordinators and supports their reappointment next year. It will, of course, be necessary to take into account the security concerns of all Member States, if we are to overcome the obstacles to the effective launch of work within the Conference. In this respect, the Union would like to reaffirm its view that the work of the subsidiary bodies of the Conference on Disarmament should begin without delay, on the basis of mandates that are pragmatic and broad enough for agreement to be reached and that cover the fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT), nuclear disarmament and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Furthermore, the Union would like to reaffirm its attachment to following up the process of expanding the Disarmament Conference, which is the only multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament and arms control, in particular as it relates to those members of the European Union that are not yet members of the Conference, as well as the associated countries which have submitted their request for admission to the Conference.

We repeat our appeal to the countries of South Asia to make every effort to prevent an arms race in the region. We call on both India and Pakistan to cooperate in the international community's efforts to strengthen the non-proliferation and disarmament regime. We repeat our call for them to implement the specific measures set out in Security Council resolution 1172

(1998), in particular the provisions relating to the signing and ratification of the CTBT.

The European Union remains concerned about the lack of significant progress in the implementation of the safeguards agreement with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and urges it to comply fully with that agreement and to cooperate fully with the Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as soon as possible, particularly with regard to the verification of its initial declaration. The European Union calls on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to implement without delay the specific programme established by the Agency, which proposes a set of preliminary stages in preparation for verification of the accuracy and exhaustiveness of the initial declaration of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The European Union recalls its financial and technical contribution to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization's activities in the Korean Peninsula. The Union repeats its appeal to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to accede unconditionally to the CTBT without delay. The Union also attaches great importance to the continuation by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its moratorium on missiles, and expresses its concern with regard to that country's exports of missiles and missile technology.

The European Union would like to reaffirm its attachment to the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and to its full implementation. We continue to support efforts to establish an effectively verifiable Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. The Union repeats its request to the only State in the region not to have acceded to the NPT to sign and ratify it. The European Union also believes that the accession of all States in the region to the conventions banning chemical and biological weapons would make an essential and very significant contribution to peace and to regional and global security. Furthermore, we call on all States in the region which have not yet done so to conclude a full-scope safeguards agreement with the IAEA.

As reaffirmed in the Principles and Objectives of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and restated in the final document of the NPT Review Conference of May 2000, the Union believes that the creation of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones, based on arrangements freely concluded between the States of the region, strengthens regional and global peace and security. We look forward to the entry into force of the Pelindaba Treaty in Africa.

The European Union attaches particular importance to the matter of compliance with the NPT. The situation in Iraq is also a matter of major concern for us. More than two years have elapsed since the IAEA Action Team's departure from that country, and inspections have still not resumed. We again call on Iraq to comply fully with all relevant Security Council resolutions, to give the IAEA and the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission the access necessary to enable them to execute their mandate and to cooperate fully with them so that they can update their information and gain a technically coherent picture of Iraq's clandestine nuclear programme, as they were able to do until 1998.

The Union notes with concern that the prolonged interruption of the inspections complicates the Agency's efforts to gain as accurate a knowledge of Iraq's nuclear programme as it had achieved in 1998, and increases the time that it will take to regain that level of knowledge. The Union notes that a routine inspection made it possible this year once again to carry out effective verification of the physical inventory of nuclear material in accordance with the safeguards agreement signed by Iraq under the NPT. This verification cannot, however, be a substitute for the activities which the Agency needs to conduct in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

The effectiveness of this strengthened system of safeguards is, of course, closely linked to the objective of universality to which the European Union attaches the greatest importance. That is why I would like to congratulate all those States that have signed or ratified additional protocols since the most recent meeting of the IAEA General Conference. On 22 September 1998, each State member of the European Union signed an additional protocol. Since then, most member States have already ratified them, and the others are currently completing the ratification process. The European Union repeats its call to those States parties to the NPT which have not yet signed a full-scope safeguards agreement to fulfil that obligation, which is incumbent on them under article III of the Treaty.

The European Union calls on all States that have signed safeguards agreements with the IAEA to conclude and implement as soon as possible the additional protocols to those agreements and to implement full-scope safeguards agreements, according them the necessary priority. The Union also appeals to all States non-party to the NPT to place all their nuclear activities under the supervision of the Agency.

Strengthening international norms and political instruments to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery is of primary importance to the Union. We have decided to step up our efforts in the fight against the proliferation of ballistic missiles. This is reflected in the conclusions of our General Affairs Council of 14 May 2001, the Declaration by the European Council in Götebo.g on 15 and 16 June 2001 and the European Union Common Position adopted on 23 July 2001 in Brussels.

The European Union supports the universalization of the draft international code of conduct drawn up by the members of the Missile Technology Control Regime. An open and transparent ad hoc international negotiating process accessible to all has just been launched. A first meeting for negotiations will be organized in France at the beginning of 2002. All States wishing to participate in the finalization of the international code of conduct will be able to do so on an equal footing and on a consensual basis. The code should be ready for adoption at the end of 2002. We encourage all States concerned to take an active part in this process.

The draft international code of conduct against ballistic missile proliferation is the most concrete and most ambitious initiative in this field, and as such offers the best chance of achieving results in the short term. This code will be a politically binding document. The European Union considers that after its adoption the code could be of interest to the United Nations and have a positive influence on other initiatives to address the proliferation of ballistic missiles, such as, for example, the proposed Global Control System.

I wish to emphasize that the Union welcomes the creation of a United Nations group of missile experts, pursuant to resolution 55/33 A, as a potentially useful mechanism for multilateral discussion of the missile question.

The European Union considers the Chemical Weapons Convention the result of the international community's determination to rid itself once and for all of one of the most abhorrent categories of weapons. This Convention is a unique disarmament and non-proliferation instrument. It is therefore imperative that its integrity and strict application be fully guaranteed.

Today, 143 States are party to the Convention. A considerable number of States, however, have yet to sign. We must work to ensure that they accede to this instrument in order to strengthen the total ban on chemical weapons and to make an effective contribution to international and regional peace and security, particularly in areas of tension. The European Union has for its part made representations to promote universal adherence to the Convention.

The European Union emphasizes the importance of the destruction obligations laid down in the Convention. In this connection, it takes the opportunity to make explicit reference to some of the Convention's articles, notably article I — which in paragraph 2 stipulates that "Each State Party undertakes to destroy chemical weapons it owns or possesses". Article IV, paragraph 6, stipulates that "Each State Party shall destroy all chemical weapons specified in paragraph 1" and that

> "destruction shall begin not later than two years after this Convention enters into force for [the State Party] and shall finish not later than 10 years after entry into force of this Convention".

These are key articles. Each State concerned is therefore under an obligation to submit detailed plans for the destruction of chemical weapons. The European Union thanks the Russian Federation for presenting its revised plan for the destruction of chemical weapons at the last meeting of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Executive Council. The Union expresses the hope that this plan will now be effectively implemented at the earliest opportunity.

In this connection, the Union also emphasizes the importance of article V of the Convention, obliging all States parties to destroy all chemical weapons production facilities on their territory not later than 10 years after the Convention's entry into force. The Union welcomes the progress made in this crucial area of the Convention and urges all States parties concerned to do everything in their power to ensure compliance with the prescribed deadlines.

The European Union gives priority to the reinforcement of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. The member States of the European Union have taken an active part in the negotiations of the Ad Hoc Group on a legally binding protocol establishing a verification and compliance regime. According to the statement by the Foreign Ministers of the European Union of 11 June 2001, a protocol including the essential principles set out in the European Union's Common Position of 17 May 1999 would strike the right balance between the Convention's compliance requirements and the national security interests and economic interests of States parties. Such a protocol would thus effectively strengthen the Convention and increase confidence in its strict application. We regret that the Ad Hoc Group was unable to finalize the work on a protocol strengthening the Convention, or even to adopt a procedural report. In the light of this failure, the Union reiterates that it attaches fundamental importance to the preservation and reinforcement of multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation regimes and to compliance with the Ad Hoc Group's mandate. Convinced that the biological weapons threat calls for an appropriate multilateral response, the European Union expresses its determination to retain and build on the experience it has acquired over many years of negotiations, including the composite text. It points to the importance it attaches to the process of strengthening the Convention, for which the next focal date will be the November Conference in Geneva.

On the question of the fight against the proliferation of, and the implementation of the international ban on, certain categories of weapons, the Union emphasizes the importance of effective export control measures. It is essential that all exporting States assume their responsibilities and take measures to ensure that exports of sensitive materials, equipment and technologies are subject to appropriate surveillance and control measures. The attacks in the United States have made us realize that these controls are more important today than ever. They are an essential element in the fight against terrorism, which could use weapons of mass destruction. An effective export control regime guarantees the peaceful use of goods, technologies and materials and can thus facilitate cooperation in areas serving technological development.

The European Union supports the efforts of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Australia Group and the Missile Technology Control Regime to provide transparency. These efforts promote dialogue and cooperation in an area in which decisions are otherwise based on national sovereignty.

The United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in New York from 9 to 20 July 2001, provided an opportunity to consider effective ways of combating the destabilizing accumulation and spread of small arms and light weapons. The Conference discussed both prevention and reduction aspects, including measures in the framework of post-conflict situations and supply-and-demand aspects. It also looked at the social and economic implications of this scourge and its development-related aspects.

In the context of the Joint Action of 17 December 1998 on the European Union's contribution to combating the destabilizing accumulation and spread of small arms and light weapons, the Union played an active role in the preparation of the Conference and in the negotiations on the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. The European Union has also endeavoured to reach a consensus in the preparation of OSCE documents on small arms and light weapons.

The Union welcomes the adoption by the Conference of an action plan that includes measures to be taken at national, regional and global levels to combat illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, with particular reference to export controls, traceability of weapons, stockpile and surplus management, the triple aspect of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and cooperation and assistance. Although the Union had hoped that the Conference would succeed in going further on certain points of the action plan, it particularly welcomes the follow-up process that has been put in place, which demonstrates that the Conference is the starting point of a process in which it will play an active part.

In June 2001, the European Union published the first annual report on the implementation of both the Joint Action, on its contribution to combating the destabilizing accumulation and spread of small arms and light weapons, and the European Union Programme for Preventing and Combating Illicit Trafficking in Conventional Arms, of June 1997. This

report was published as a document of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

Responsibility in arms transfer policies is essential in resolving the problem of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The Code of Conduct for Arms Exports, adopted by the Council of the European Union on 8 June 1998, establishes criteria for conventional arms transfers and provides for consultation procedures to promote convergence of national arms export policies of member States.

The Union published its second annual report on the Code's application on 3 January 2001. The report notes that the second year of implementation of the Code of Conduct was marked by further progress, in particular by a considerable increase in the number of denials of arms exports notified by member States, which is evidence of member States' resolve to act in greater concert in this area. The report also emphasizes that member States have agreed to further clarify notified denials and that the Council of the European Union has been able to finalize a Common List of Military Equipment covered by the Code. This is an evolving list.

The report also indicates priority guidelines for the near future, singling out the following issues in particular: finalization of a common list of non-military security and police equipment, development of exchanges of information on national control policies for the export of arms to certain countries or regions regarded as requiring special vigilance, harmonization of national annual reports on the application of the Code, coordination of the member States' positions in multilateral bodies and promotion of the principles of the Code in third countries.

The Union underlines the importance of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, not only as a global confidence-building measure to support stability and security, but also as a measure encouraging regional efforts aimed at greater transparency. However, it is the extent of the participation in this instrument that enhances its significance. The Union calls on all States to submit timely declarations of their imports and exports to the Register, including — to further increase transparency and strengthen the value of the Register — information on military holdings and procurement through national production. The inclusion of such data will render the Register more complete and useful. The Union reiterates its support for strengthening the Register, for extending its scope as quickly as possible, and for its universalization.

The Ottawa Convention on the prohibition of anti-personnel mines currently has 21 signatories and 121 parties. It is clear that an international standard has been created that cannot now be ignored. However, we must do even better and reach the entire international community. The success of the Ottawa Convention should not just be measured by the number of States that have acceded to it. Since it entered into force, trade in anti-personnel mines has virtually ceased and the production of such mines has considerably decreased. Similarly, the number of victims in the countries most affected is constantly falling, and worldwide more financial aid is being granted every year for mine clearance, assistance to victims and mine awareness programmes.

It is also essential to implement the Convention and to rid the world of this weapon. The Union deplores any act contrary to the letter and the spirit of the Convention and is deeply concerned by the allegations in the last Landmine Monitor Report that certain States parties and non-State actors are continuing to use anti-personnel mines.

We have no time to lose. The Convention lays down strict time limits for the destruction of stocks and the clearance of mined areas. Let us marshal all our efforts to achieve the objectives of the Convention by the deadlines set. The countries that are the victims must not be left to carry out this struggle alone. The international community as a whole must help realize the Convention's aims.

The Union thanks the Government of Nicaragua for organizing the Third Meeting of States Parties and welcomes the conclusions reached at that Meeting, in particular the adoption of a guide on transparency measures in implementation of article 7 of the Convention. This instrument will allow us to draw up better national reports on the implementation of the Ottawa Convention. The Meeting also approved the information dossier produced by the International Committee of the Red Cross to promote implementation of article 9 of the Convention.

The member States of the Union reaffirm the importance they attach to the Convention by playing an active role in its intersessional work as co-chairs and

co-rapporteurs. The Union welcomes the decision to strengthen the intersessional process by setting up a support service for the implementation of the Convention.

The Union also expresses its gratitude to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, to other non-governmental organizations concerned and to the regional and international organizations, including the International Committee of the Red Cross, for their substantial and important contribution to the intersessional work and, overall, to the implementation and the consolidation of the Convention. The Union would also like to thank all the agencies involved in mine clearance, mine awareness, assistance to victims, the destruction of stocks and other efforts towards our common goal.

The Union has responded generously to the challenge of anti-personnel mines. In recent years, it has done so particularly through its policies for development aid, rehabilitation and reconstruction, humanitarian aid and research, while setting up policies specifically designed to meet this problem. It continues to offer aid to initiatives and research to alleviate the suffering of the victims of these mines. In the year 2000, a total of 125 million euros was earmarked by the European Community and the Member States for implementation of the Convention, making the Union the world's major donor in this area. The Union would stress that this sum constitutes a 10 per cent increase over its contributions in 1999. The Union has recently adopted two regulations aimed at strengthening our efforts to eliminate landmines.

We are convinced that it is essential to continue to strengthen the coordination of international assistance in our efforts to eliminate anti-personnel mines so as to achieve a better allocation of resources. In that context, we wish to stress the importance of the review of the United Nations mine action strategy for the period 2001-2005, to which the Union makes both a formal and a substantive contribution. For its part, the European Commission has sent the European Parliament and the European Council a communication detailing a policy that will place the European Union in the vanguard of the struggle to abolish anti-personnel mines.

The Union attaches great importance to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW). To date, four Protocols have supplemented this Convention in addition to Protocol II, as amended on 3 May 1996. They are all of fundamental humanitarian interest. The Convention and its Protocols constitute an essential instrument for the international community for controlling conventional weapons that are deemed to be particularly inhumane.

The Union therefore welcomes the fact that many States have acceded to the Convention and its Protocols. It appeals to all States that have not yet done so to take all the necessary steps to become parties to the regime as soon as possible, and thus give both civilians and combatants the protection they deserve.

The European Union hopes that the follow-up conference to be held in Geneva from 11 to 21 December will be crowned with success and allow for an exchange of ideas on implementation of the Convention and for entering into new commitments in order to strengthen the humanitarian standards that we share.

On the substance, diverse proposals and ideas have already been formulated that will have to be examined at the conference. The Union supports the idea of giving a mandate for negotiating a Protocol on the explosive remnants of war. This negotiation could start after the follow-up conference. The Union is particularly concerned about the serious problems caused by the explosive remnants of war and the humanitarian and social repercussions of the presence of unexploded ordnance. We cannot turn a blind eye to the human and social cost of these explosive remnants of war.

Furthermore, Protocol II, as amended, gives us a precedent that could be extended to the entire Convention — namely, the applicability of these international standards to non-international armed conflicts. The amended Protocol II was a significant stage in the strengthening of the CCW regime, particularly since the parties have come to agree on extending the application of these international standards to non-international armed conflicts. Since most conflicts today are internal, the Union hopes that the review conference in December will be able to decide to extend the scope of the entire CCW regime to non-international conflicts.

The Union also attaches great importance to the possibility of incorporating in the Convention a simple, effective mechanism for strengthening its enforcement.

The Union hopes to be able to strengthen the regime applicable to landmines, other than anti-personnel mines. The Union welcomes the proposals on the detectability of these mines and on the possibility of equipping remotely laid mines, other than anti-personnel mines, with self-destruct or self-neutralizing mechanisms, together with back-up self-deactivation devices.

The European Union is prepared to discuss other ways of strengthening humanitarian law in connection with this Convention.

The common European security and defence policy (ESDP) aims to give the Union the means to play its role fully on the international stage and to assume its responsibilities in crisis situations. The Union is determined to establish an autonomous capacity that will allow it to take decisions and, where the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as a whole is not engaged, to launch and then to conduct military operations under the leadership of the European Union in response to international crises. The development of the ESDP will increase the Union's ability to contribute to international peace and security, in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter.

The development of European crisis-management capabilities is an additional asset for responding to emerging or existing conflicts. As the ESDP develops, Europeans will, inter alia, be able to respond more effectively and more coherently to requests from leading organizations such as the United Nations or the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Detailed procedures for cooperation between the European Union and the United Nations, as well as between the European Union and the OSCE, have been established, and certain topics have been selected for cooperation with the United Nations.

The scope of the ESDP is defined in the Treaty on European Union. The Union's objective is to have the capability to carry out the full range of "Petersberg" tasks: humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking. This does not involve the creation of a European army. The commitment of national resources by member States to such operations will be based on their sovereign decisions.

At Nice it was decided that the Union should quickly be made operational and that a decision to that end would be taken by the European Council, no later than at its meeting in Laeken at the end of the current presidency. To achieve this objective, the Union has set up permanent structures; it is developing and testing crisis-management procedures; and it is continuing the work already in progress on capabilities. It is also pursuing negotiations with NATO to reach early agreement on arrangements whereby the European Union can have access to NATO capabilities and resources. The member States have set themselves the global objective of being able, by 2003, to deploy within 60 days and sustain for at least one year forces of up to 60,000 persons. The conference on capability improvement to be held in November will be an important step towards the achievement of this goal.

The ESDP amounts to more than just the military aspects of crisis management. The added value of the Union — its particular characteristic — is its capacity to mobilize a vast range of both civilian and military means and instruments, thus giving it a global crisis management capability. The development of means in the civilian sphere is also an important part of the European Union's efforts. Four priority areas have been identified: a police force; strengthening the rule of law; strengthening civil administration; and civil protection. Work on the police is progressing well. A ministerial pledging conference on police is to be held under the Belgian presidency. Specific goals were also defined at Göteborg for the other areas identified.

Finally, the Union is not just intent on managing crises. It is also determined to develop conflict-prevention, to alleviate the causes of potential conflicts. The programme that it adopted in Göteborg for the prevention of violent conflicts demonstrates its determination to act in this area, using in a consistent manner the various instruments at its disposal, including arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

During 2000 the Union declared its readiness to take a major part in all efforts aimed at improving the capabilities, coherence and effectiveness of the OSCE. These should encompass recognition of the legal personality of the OSCE, as well as a homogeneous regime of privileges and immunities.

The Union has stressed the need for closer and more operational cooperation with the OSCE in civilian crisis management and conflict prevention, in conformity with the Istanbul Charter and its Platform for Cooperative Security, as well as decisions by the European Council in meetings in Helsinki, Feira and Nice.

The European Union urges nations not to relax their efforts to achieve the fundamental objectives of disarmament and non-proliferation. Multilateral work must continue and even be stepped up. The Union hopes that the current session of the First Committee will contribute to this, in keeping with the Organization's mission: the consolidation of peace and security through international cooperation.

The Chairman: I remind members that the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions has been set at 6 p.m. on Thursday, 18 October. I urge members to submit their drafts as early as possible — especially the "traditional" draft resolutions and those that might have financial implications.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.